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3) Prime Minister's Official Residence (Kantei)

Prime Minister's schedule, May 12

07:07

Met at Kantei with Deputy Chief Cabinet Secretary Matsumoto.

08:30

Attended cabinet meeting in Diet building. METI Minister Nikai remained. Met afterwards with Finance Minister Yosano.

09:00

Attended Lower House Budget Committee session.

12:08

Returned to Kantei.

13:02

Attended Lower House plenary session.

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13:45

Met at Kantei with Special Advisor Yamaguchi, followed by Cabinet Intelligence Director Mitani.

16:45

Met with State Minister of Consumer Affairs Noda.

17:35

Met with Russian Prime Minister Putin.

19:56

Attended signing ceremony. Held joint conference.

20:35

Hosted dinner party (for Putin).

22:12

Returned to his official residence.

4) Japan, Russia sign nuclear energy accord; Summit agrees on stepping up territorial talks

NIKKEI (Top play) (Excerpts)
May 13, 2009

Prime Minister Taro Aso met with Russian Premier Vladimir Putin at the Prime Minister's Official Residence on May 12, where the two leaders reached agreement on signing a nuclear energy cooperation agreement and other matters. Cooperation on energy, the environment, security, and other strategic areas will deepen based on a new framework, which will include this agreement. On the Northern Territories issue, Putin stated at the post-summit joint news conference that, "All options will be discussed." While no concrete progress has been made, the two sides agreed to step up work toward a final solution.

At the beginning of the summit talks, Aso stressed that, "We would like to see the two countries work together as important strategic partners in Asia and the Pacific." Putin responded with: "I am confident that no matter how difficult a problem is, it can be solved between friends."

The two premiers agreed that the absence of a peace treaty is an obstacle to progress in bilateral relations, and that the issue of sovereignty over the four Northern Islands needs to be resolved. They confirmed that work toward a solution acceptable to both sides based on existing agreements will be stepped up.

5) Four northern islands: Japanese, Russian premiers vow to speed up efforts to settle issue

YOMIURI (Page 1) (Excerpts)
May 13, 2009

Prime Minister Aso on the evening of May 12 met with Russian Premier

Putin at the Kantei. Concerning the pending Northern Territories issue, the two leaders agreed on the need to reach a final agreement on the ownership of the four islands and vowed to speed up efforts to search for measures that are acceptable to both sides. Putin indicated an outlook that Aso and President Medvedev at their summit to be held on the sidelines of the G-8 Summit in July would discuss

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every option to find a breakthrough (settlement measures) in the stalemate.

Regarding the territorial issue, Aso and Putin determined that: (1) the absence of a peace treaty between the two countries is hampering progress in bilateral relations; (2) there is the need for the two countries to reach a final settlement on the ownership of the four northern islands; and (3) in order for the territorial issue to be settled during their generation, the two countries will speed up efforts to explore measures that are acceptable to both countries.

Aso during a joint press conference after the meeting said, "The meeting was very meaningful in view of the July Summit, as it was affirmed that Premier Putin has a strong will to finally settle the issue."

6) Listening to experts on the Japan-Russia summit

YOMIURI (Page 4) (Full)
May 13, 2009

Minoru Tamba, former ambassador to Russia - No progress made

The signing of a nuclear agreement carries significance, but when it came to the most crucial issues of resolving the Northern Territories row and concluding a peace treaty, (the statement) was dotted with only some expressions that were used in past summits. No progress was made.

Although President Dmitry Medvedev is calling for a "new creative and unconventional approach," real power rests with (Prime Minister) Vladimir Putin. During his second term as president, Putin said, "Under international law, sovereignty over the four islands rests with Russia." There are no signs that he has changed his standpoint. The optimistic and groundless argument of having 3.5 of the four islands back has emerged as a result of being taken in by Medvedev's smooth talk. We must not be fooled. This is the time of endurance and patience. I do not want to see Japan becoming the laughing stock of the world for not pursuing justice.

Masaru Sato, former Foreign Ministry chief analyst -- Severe stance shown

Attention must be focused on the fact that in his talks with Prime Minister Aso, Prime Minister Putin referred to the Japan-Soviet Joint Declaration (that specifies the return of the Habomai islet group and Shikotan). The statement takes an extremely severe standpoint that the return of the two islands is the starting point for talks (with Japan) and that Russia will not make concessions, such as the rerun of 3.5 of the four islands as was referred to by government representative Shotaro Yachi. Prime Minister Aso who pins hopes on a "new creative and unconventional approach" is now being pressed to revamp his scenario.

Instead, Japan should advance cooperation with Russia on the new influenza. Having know-how on measures against biological weapons, Russia excels in basic technology, such as the development of vaccines. I believe such efforts to increase mutual understanding will help set the stage for resolving the territorial issue.

7) Guam pact to get Diet approval

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TOKYO SHIMBUN (Page 2) (Abridged)
May 13, 2009

The House of Councillors Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee met yesterday afternoon and voted down an intergovernmental agreement between Japan and the United States on the planned relocation of Okinawa-based U.S. Marines to Guam, with a majority of votes from the opposition parties against it. The House of Councillors is expected to vote down the Guam relocation pact in its plenary sitting today as well. However, the bilateral agreement is positioned as a treaty. The pact has cleared the House of Representatives, so the Diet will call a conference committee of both houses as stipulated by the Constitution. If the conference committee sees no consensus, the House of Representatives' decision will take precedence, and the pact will be confirmed.

8) Lower chamber ratifies anti-cluster treaty; Tailwind to expand signatories

MAINICHI (Page 3) (Slightly abridged)
May 13, 2009

Ken Uzuka, and Katsumi Sawada, Geneva

Unexploded bombs dispersed from cluster munitions kill or wound civilians. The Convention on Cluster Munitions, also known as the Oslo Treaty, bans such cluster munitions and requires its signatories to scrap their cluster munitions. Japan is a signatory of the treaty, and the House of Representatives ratified the treaty in its plenary sitting of all members yesterday. The world welcomed this move with high expectations, saying it will encourage other Asian countries to sign the treaty. Japan is now the first to ratify the treaty. However, the Japanese government has been equivocal about the U.S. military's use of cluster munitions. Tokyo remains inarticulate since it relies heavily on its alliance with the United States.

The treaty for banning cluster munitions has so far been ratified by seven countries, including Ireland and Laos. All seven nations are small or have had casualties among their civilians. Japan is the first among major countries to ratify the anti-cluster treaty in its parliament.

A United Nations official in Geneva showed his interest in Japan's move by saying: "I was just reading an article about the House of Representatives Foreign Affairs Committee's ratification of the treaty on May 8."

This U.N. official welcomed the lower chamber's passage of the treaty as "a strong message to Asian countries." The official added, "I hope Japan will display leadership and try to persuade its neighbors, including China and South Korea, to join in."

Meanwhile, Japan was the 45th country to ratify the antipersonnel landmine banning treaty in September 1998. Japan stands out this time with its proactive stance. Japan first withheld its position regarding the 2007 Oslo process of disarmament negotiations to conclude the treaty. Japan, which was criticized for being "backward looking," suddenly began to join the leading group. European countries are fettered with their domestic industries that manufacture cluster munitions. Japan, which unlike European countries does not have such fetters, was quick to set forth the

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idea of "total abolition." Besides, Japan had expectations for alternative weapons. This made it possible for Japan to make a rapid start.

In fact, however, Japan is not so strong-willed when it comes to disarmament. Senior Vice Defense Minister Seigo Kitamura, when sitting in on the Foreign Affairs Committee, was asked about the possibility of scrapping cluster munitions before the treaty comes into effect. "It is not appropriate to completely rule out the possibility of unavoidable use," Kitamura stated before the committee, adhering to the possibility of cluster munitions.

Furthermore, U.S. Forces Japan (USFJ) stores cluster munitions in Japan and uses them in training. Asked about this fact, Foreign

Minister Hirofumi Nakasone showed his intention to accept the U.S. military's cluster munitions. "It's inappropriate to constraint the facilitative implementation of bilateral security arrangements between Japan and the United States," Nakasone stated before the committee. This is because the Oslo treaty allows "military cooperation and military operations" with non-signatories under certain conditions.

The government says Japan is working on the United States to sign the Oslo treaty. Even so, the government intends to separate disarmament and Japan-U.S. bilateral security. This 'double standard' was pursued at the committee. Seiken Akamine, a House of Representatives member from the Japanese Communist Party, took up the U.S. military's use of cluster bombs on the Okinawa prefectural island of Torishima. Akamine criticized it, saying: "The fear of Okinawa Prefecture's people is immeasurable. They use cluster bombs in training however they like. This is against the spirit of the treaty."

9) Japan to propose keeping int'l tabs on terrorism info

SANKEI (Page 1) (Abridged)
May 13, 2009

The National Police Agency has worked out a plan to construct a database of information about international terrorist groups and their activities like announcing terrorism or recruiting agents. The NPA initiative is for multiple countries to work together and monitor Internet bulletin boards or other online writings. As soon as such write-ins are spotted, these will be translated into English and will be databased. NPA Deputy Commissioner General Takaharu Ando will propose this initiative today in a meeting of ASEAN Chiefs of Police (or ASEANAPOL for short) in Hanoi, Vietnam. Europe has already launched a similar database, but this is the first time for Asia to construct such a database. "In the future," a senior NPA official said, "we can cooperate with Europe." The official added, "This will lead to strengthening the international monitoring network against terrorism."

10) Hatoyama, Okada expected to run for DPJ president

ASAHI (Top Play) (Full)
May 13, 2009

The possibility has become stronger that the May 16 presidential election of the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) will be a contest between DPJ Secretary General Yukio Hatoyama and Vice President Katsuya Okada. Okada yesterday conveyed his intention to run in the

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race to those close to him. Meanwhile, Hatoyama revealed to an Asahi Shimbun reporter his intention to run in the election, and he is expected to declare his candidacy soon.

The DPJ leadership race will be a contest between the two former presidents. Hatoyama, supporting former President Seiji Maehara and incumbent President Ichiro Ozawa as secretary general, paved the way for Ozawa's resignation. He intends to fight in the election as Ozawa's successor and carry on Ozawa's policy of placing top priority on the daily lives of the people.

Ozawa appears to favor Hatoyama. It is predicted that besides the Hatoyama-led group, the group supporting Ozawa and many in the DPJ from the House of Councillors will back Hatoyama.

Okada yesterday told the press corps that he was thinking about the election "carefully." He then conveyed his intention to run for the presidency to his aides, saying: "I have a sense of alarm that a change in government will be impossible unless I run in the race." He will hold a press conference on May 14 to formally announce his candidacy. Since he had distanced himself from the Ozawa-led party administration, he would likely break away from Ozawa's policies.

Many junior and mid-level DPJ lawmakers have called on Okada to become the next DPJ president. Yoshihiko Noda said last night in a meeting of his group: "I would like to support Mr. Okada." Some

lawmakers have already started collecting recommendations for Okada.

11) DPJ new leader to be selected in vote by only members of both Houses

MAINICHI (Page 5) (Excerpts)
May 13, 2009

Under the Democratic Party of Japan's (DPJ) rules, two methods are presented for selecting its new leader if the incumbent steps down before his or her term of office expires. Besides the usual formula, another method of taking a vote by only members of both Houses in their joint plenary meeting is also provided. This method is adopted as an exceptional case, with consideration given to emergency. The DPJ presidential race on May 16 will be held based on this provision.

Usually, a ballot is taken by Diet members, candidates endorsed by the party for a national election, and local assembly members, registered party members, and supporters (about 270,000 as of August 2008). The numbers of votes are counted based on points. Votes by party members are taken in 300 single-seat constituencies, so it takes a long period for an election to be over.

12) Opinion poll on who is most appropriate to become new DPJ president: Okada marks 23 PERCENT , Hatoyama 16 PERCENT

TOKYO SHIMBUN (Page 1) (Abridged slightly)
May 13, 2009

In the wake of Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) President Ichiro Ozawa's announcement to step down, Kyodo News Service conducted a nationwide telephone-based opinion survey on May 11-12 asking who is most suitable to become the next DPJ head. As a result, 23.7 PERCENT of respondents cited Vice President Katsuya Okada and 16.9 PERCENT

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Secretary General Yukio Hatoyama.

Some 65.5 PERCENT said Ozawa should have resigned earlier, 18.5 PERCENT indicated Ozawa should have stayed on to face the next Lower House election as party head, and 13.2 PERCENT said the timing was appropriate. Increasing party unity was Ozawa's reason to quit, but 68.2 PERCENT found this unconvincing. The general public still remains critical of Ozawa's response to the massive donation scandal involving Nishimatsu Construction Co.

The rate of support for the Aso cabinet dropped 1.6 points from the previous survey in late April to 28.0 PERCENT . The disapproval rate also fell 1.1 points to 55.1 PERCENT .

Asked which party they would vote for in the proportional representation segment in the next Lower House election, 26.7 PERCENT pointed to the Liberal Democratic Party and 36.5 PERCENT to the DPJ. In terms of the rate of support for party, the LDP surpassed the DPJ at 26.6 PERCENT and 25.9 PERCENT , respectively.

13) Survey of prefectoral branch executives: 13 votes for Okada, 4 for Hatoyama as desirable DPJ head

YOMIURI (Page 2) (Full)
May 13, 2009

As the best choice (including several replies) for the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) presidency, 13 prefectoral chapters chose Vice President Katsuya Okada, while only four supported Secretary General Hatoyama, according to a survey of executives of DPJ prefectoral branches nationwide conducted yesterday by the Yomiuri Shimbun. Any specific names were not cited by 29 prefectures.

The survey was conducted by having pollsters pick Okada, Hatoyama, or others as desirable party head.

As priorities given in selecting the party's new leader, "leadership" cited by the largest number of executives, followed by

"political ideology," and "cleanness." Among the prefectures that picked Okada, many cited "cleanness," probably focusing on his efforts to deal with political funds problems. Meanwhile, the Tochigi Prefectural Assembly said it supported Hatoyama, citing the reason that he is fully aware of the need for continuity of party management and local circumstances.

Asked if they think President Ichiro Ozawa fulfilled his accountability for the arrest of his aide for receiving illegal political donations from Nishimatsu Construction Co., 24 prefectures gave a positive reply, while 12 prefectures said he didn't.

14) Ruling party members expect Hatoyama to become DPJ head, anticipating public criticism as "puppet in hands of Ozawa"

MAINICHI (Page 5) (Excerpts)
May 13, 2009

An increasing number of members of the Liberal Democratic Party and the New Komeito have voiced a hope that Secretary General Yukio Hatoyama will become next Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) president. Their speculation is that if Hatoyama, who supported President Ichiro Ozawa as the party's secretary general even after the arrest of his aide over a political funds scandal, becomes his successor,

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the ruling coalition would be able to keep "the tactics of criticizing Ozawa," which it once lost with Ozawa's announcement of his resignation. The DPJ's chance of regaining strength is considered dependent on its new leader. Given this, the ruling parties are paying close attention to who would become Ozawa's successor.

Asked in a press briefing yesterday about the impact of the DPJ's next president on the next Lower House election, LDP Secretary General Hiroyuki Hosoda just replied: "There will be no particular impact." Triggered by the arrest of Ozawa's first state-funded secretary over the money scandal, public support of the cabinet of Prime Minister Aso began to shoot up. LDP Executive Council Chairman Takashi Sasagawa said in a press conference yesterday: "The DPJ's error saved (the Aso cabinet), in a sense."

The ruling coalition fears this scenario: Amid people placing high hopes on the new DPJ president, the next general election is held. Bearing such a possibility in mind, many coalition members expect Hatoyama, who is close to Ozawa, will be elected to head the main opposition party. A senior LDP member said: "(If Hatoyama assumes the presidency), the image that Mr. Ozawa is actually pulling the strings behind the scenes will be projected." A senior New Komeito member commented: "(If Hatoyama assumes the presidency), we can criticize him as being a puppet in the hands of Ozawa." A government source said: "Mr. Hatoyama holding a lead is desirable for us. Such a case is preferable for the prime minister." An LDP faction leader remarked: "(If Hatoyama becomes party president,) we can criticize him, citing his earlier remark that he would take joint responsibility with Mr. Ozawa."

15) DPJ presidential race to be contest between pro-Ozawa and non-Ozawa candidates

MAINICHI (Page 2) (Excerpts)
May 13, 2009

The upcoming Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) presidential election to choose the replacement of President Ichiro Ozawa has taken a strong aspect of being a contest between pro-Ozawa and non-Ozawa candidates. In yesterday's executive and standing secretaries general meetings which decided on the date for the election, a pro-Ozawa lawmaker close to Secretary General Yukio Hatoyama asserted that the election should be conducted on May 15 in order to put an end to the matter as early as possible, but a non-Ozawa group lawmaker backing Vice President Katsuya Okada stressed that the election should be pushed back so that rank and file party members and supporters can vote. As a result, the pro-Ozawa camp steamrolled it and dissatisfaction has grown in the non-Ozawa bloc.

Hatoyama and Okada yesterday made up their mind to run in the election of the new DPJ president.

The pro-Ozawa groups, which support Hatoyama, include: the Hatoyama group called the group to bring about a change in government (about 40 members), the Isshinkai group supporting Ozawa (about 40 members); former Socialist Party ranks (about 15 members), including Upper House Caucus Chairman Azuma Koshiishi; and former Democratic Socialist Party ranks (about 20 members).

The non-Ozawa groups backing Okada include: the policy group Ryounkai (about 30 members), headed by Vice President Seiji Maehara

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(about 30 members); and the policy group Kaseikai (about 20 members) led by Public relations Committee Chairman Yoshihiko Noda. Maehara met last night in Tokyo with several Ryounkai members and they confirmed that their group would support Okada. Noda clearly stated in a meeting of his group: "We should back Mr. Okada." However, the Noda group refrained from making a final decision. One of the lawmakers supporting Okada said: "The smooth transference of the presidency has been secretly promised" between Ozawa and Hatoyama because Ozawa on May 3 revealed his intention to quit his post.

Yesterday, sparks flew between the groups supporting Hatoyama and Okada over how to conduct the election of the new DPJ president.

16) Deputy Chief Cabinet Secretary Konoike to step down possibly because of weekly magazine article

YOMIURI (Page 1) (Abridged slightly)
May 13, 2009

Deputy Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshitada Konoike, 68, decided yesterday to step down from his post, according to a senior government official. Konoike is a Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) House of Councillors member representing Hyogo Prefecture. He will tender his resignation to Prime Minister Taro Aso as early as today. A health problem is the ostensible reason. But the real reason seems to lie in the prospect that a weekly magazine going on sale today will carry an article reporting that Konoike used a free Diet member's JR train pass for a private trip with a female acquaintance.

The resignation of a deputy chief cabinet secretary at the center of the administration is certain to deal a serious blow to the Aso administration. Katsuhito Asano, 71, an LDP Upper House member, is being suggested as Konoike's potential successor.

According to the weekly magazine, Konoike used the free train pass when he took Shinkansen bullet trains to and from the city of Atami, Shizuoka Prefecture, on a three-day two-night visit starting on April 28. All lawmakers receive free passes under the lawmakers' annual salary law. Under the law, Diet members are allowed to use their passes when performing their duties. A weekly magazine also reported in January that Konoike had spent time with a female acquaintance at the lawmakers' Diet dormitory in Tokyo.

Konoike, a member of the Aso faction, is now serving his third term in the Upper House. He was appointed deputy chief cabinet secretary by Prime Minister Aso last September after serving in other posts such as Upper House Budget Committee chair.

ZUMWALT